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Forestall Evictions From B. R. Hills

EPHEMERA

A study on the impact of the proposed implementation of the Karnataka Government's Wild life Protection Act (1972) on the Soliga tribals of B. R. Hills in Mysore district.

Karnataka Civil
Liberties Committee

For the forest people of India, 1947 has brought no new freedom. On the contrary the state has clamped down even more harshly than it did in the past, on the rights of forest dwellers. From preventing their use of major forest produce and curbing their movement within the forests which automatically strikes a death blow to their food gathering activities; the government has even drawn the line on their rights on minor forest produce and has banned their agricultural activity.

In B. R. Hills the implementation of the Wild Life Protection Act (1972) is precisely another such legislation which aims at evicting the Soliga tribals from their own habitat.

To justify these anti-tribal policies the government has been drawing public attention to aspects like forest destruction and ecological devastation as the motive for stamping down on the rights of the forest people. This viewpoint makes it appear that the forest dwellers are the cause for deforestation and that with their eviction the ecological balance will automatically be restored.

However as this KCLC investigation reveals, harm to forests is caused by the planters and industrialists in the main, and the damage caused by Soligas is negligible. What indeed must be arrested is the onslaught of the Forest Department itself which acts on behalf of these entrenched economic interests. At the same time it is a fact that legislations like the Karnataka Wild Life Protection Act (1972) are implemented not to preserve forests but as a means to obtain absolute monopoly to control and further their use as industrial raw material even if it may be at the cost of the rights of tribals to their land, life, culture, wealth. or of the ecosystem itself.

Bangalore November 1984

Introduction

3000 members of the Soliga tribe, original inhabitants of the BiligiriRanga Hills, will be soon be uprooted from the forests where they have been living for thousands of years.

B. R. Hills was declared a wild life sanctuary in 1974. In a bid to enforce The Wild Life Protection Act (1972) the Deputy Commissioner of Mysore district directed the Village Accountant of B. R. Hills, in the first week of July 1984. to make an enumeration of all privately owned land in the area within two months. Those not covered by the enumeration would have to declare their rights to the land by August 31, 1984. This would mean a death blow to the Soligas since most of them do not have documents to prove their rights to the land.

Therefore the Karnataka Civil Liberties Committee sent a fact-finding team to B. R. Hills to make an on-the-spot study of the threat to the livelihood of the Soligas caused by enforcement of The Wild Life Protection Act in this area. The team consisted of K. Ravi (Engineer), C.K. Meena (Journalist) and N.S. Ashok (Lecturer).

B. R Hills is a beautiful range of moist deciduous forest situated in the southern part of Mysore district. It covers around 638 square kilometres. The Soligas have inhabited these forests for hundreds of years now. Till nearly 200 years ago they led an uninterrupted life of plenty, practising shifting cultivation. hunting small game and gathering roots and greens to supplement their food. Food would be produced separately by families but consumed collectively. When an individual harvested his land all the members of the settlement visited him and took a share of his

produce. During the lean season they would barter forest produce with the plains people (naadavaru) for essentials like salt, chillies, clothes etc.

Each settlement (podu) consisting of 10 to 20 families had a large area of forest to itself. The few internal disputes of each podu would be settled by its Yajamana, an elder chosen by consensus. The first impact of the outside world was in 1800 when the BiligiriRanga temple on top of the Hills was put in charge of some Srivaishnavite Brahmins. The temple was granted 22300 acres of forest land as Sarva Inam. The temple priests disrupted the primitive democratic organization of the Soligas. The Yajamana was given pride of place in the temple rituals and co-opted into a hierarchial set up with the temple authorities at the apex.

In 1871 came the next intrusion when 1200 acres of the south-eastern slopes of B R. Hills were converted to coffee plantations. (Most of this even today nestles among the densest part of the forest.) It was around this time that by a series of forest enactments the colonial government unlocked for itself the wealth of Indian forests. The British government denuded vast stretches of virgin forest to provide timber for railway sleepers and the British shipping industry. Exploitation of the forests increased during the World Wars.

After the Indian government came to power it only stepped up the exploitation of forests. For example the forest department's average annual revenue for the whole of India during 1936–'39 was Rs. 2.59 crores while in 1951–'54 it was Rs. 21.01 crores and by 1980–'81 it leapt to Rs. 472.54 crores.

The Forest Department and the Soligas

We shall now see how the Forest Department made use of the Soligas to serve its own interests and that of industry. (The products of the exploitation of forests go primarily to satisfy the needs of the paper and pulp industry and urban fuelwood needs).

Before the 1960s the Soligas lived in 20-odd major settlements practising shifting cultivation. Approximately 2 acres would be cultivated by a family for around 3 years. They would raise one crop a year. Thus after 3 crops they would move to a new area which would be cleared again for cultivation. They would not return to the area already cultivated, thus allowing the forest to regenerate itself

After the 60s shifting cultivation was banned. The Soligas were removed from their 20-odd settlements, herded together and brought to three major colonies constructed for the purpose. Yerakanagadda, Bedguli and Kanneri. In the name of tribal development houses were built for them. Abont 96 acres were granted with title deeds to around 20 Soligas in Yerakanagadde. Most of the others remained landless. We find that the motive behind the 'development' of the tribals was only to maintain access to a cheap and readily available supply of labour which the Soligas provided. It was convenient to have them gathered together and housed in the forest department's colonies. The Soligas thus came to be dependent partly on the work given by the Forest Department for their livelihood. The other source of their livelihood is the peculiar system of cultivation that the Forest Department bureaucrats created.

The Forest Department graciously permits the Soligas to clear a patch of land for cultivation. After a while the Soligas are made to dig pits in this area and teak, silver oak and eucalyptus saplings are planted. In the process of protecting their crops the Soligas also tend the saplings. Two to three years later when the saplings have grown sufficiently the Soligas are forcibly evicted from the land. Their resentment is quelled by promises of fresh land. But the same cycle of planting crops, tending saplings and eventual eviction repeats itself over and over again.

The happenings at Guruvinagadde are a case in point. Guruvinagadde was a traditional hamlet where developmental activities were undertaken in 1972. 38 houses were built, roads

were laid, wells were dug and fruit saplings were given. 4 years ago when then Conservator of Forests met the Soligas he promised them by touching the land that he would give them the land (about 490 acres) that they were cultivating there. After the Conservator of Forests was transferred they were all evicted from there–their houses were burnt and their crops destroyed when they rightfully asserted that this was land promised to them. This betrayal by the Forest Department has become part of the folklore of the Soligas. A play that is very popular among them re–enacts the events at Guruvinagadde. Ironically, the Soligas of this and other settlements have been included in the voters' list, along with their house numbers. One of the available letters of right (hakku patra), for example, is of one Nanja, son of Mukkinanja, in Guruvinagadde, who was allotted Survey No. 4, Site No. 36

Under the transformed mode of shifting cultivation the Soligas are totally dependent on the 'benevolence' of the Forest Department whose main interest lies in extracting the maximum revenue from the forest at the cost of natural forests (See table 6)

Who poses a threat to forest and wild life ?

Another well–known ploy of the government to wrest land from the tribals is to hold them responsible for destruction of forests and wild life. Wee see this ploy at work in B. R. Hills where the Forest Department has sought to 'protect' its trees and animals by declaring it a sanctuary. But to protect it against whom, is the question.

Let us first consider the felling of trees. As we have noted, slash and burn cultivation is banned by the Government and has totally stopped in B. R. Hills. Soligas make use of the forest only for firewood. They do not cut trees for this purpose but merely collect dried twigs and deadwood which they use for cooking and to keep themselves warm in the nights. This would

hardly come to 10 kilos of deadwood per family in a day which amounts to approximately 6,000 tonnes a year.

Contrast this with the Forest Department whose primary interest has been to maximise forest revenue. Most of its annual revenue in B R. Hills comes from major forest produce like honne. *(Pterocarpus marsupium)* matti. *(Terminalia tomentosa)* teak and bamboo. This is in keeping with the general trend of forest produce collection in the State where large quantities of wood are allotted to plywood, matchwood and paper industries. Tables 1, 2, 3, 4 clearly indicate that most of the wood goes into industries. (Even this is given to them at a subsidised rate). In the B. R. Hills for instance, the forests were a primary source of sandalwood for the perfume industry. But the exploitation has been so complete that today it is difficult to find even a single sandalwood tree in the area.

The Forest Department for all its "scientific forestry" and highly qualified personnel has involved in clear felling along the hill slopes as can be seen in Uppnare Podu, leading to the complete erosion of topsoil. The degree of erosion caused by indiscriminate clear felling at Uppnare blocked the road so much that it had to be cleared for the movement of traffic.

B. R. Hills which is composed mainly of Charnockite rocks also contains some open deposits of Black Granite. Today Black Granite has got a good market in Japan and fetches the Karnataka Government several crores as profits. A few years ago the Department of Mines leased out the Black Granite deposits to private mining agencies. The exploitation of Black Granite has led to the disappearance of the rocky hill tops and the creation of deep quarries causing destruction to the flora surrounding these hills. Due to the unexpected profits Black Granite has fetched private miners, the State Government in a recent move stopped all private contracts and through the Mysore Minerals Corporation is monopolising the mining, and the sale of Black Granite to Japan. It is quite probable that they might commence

mining in other parts of B. R. Hills where deposits are plentiful, causing further destruction of forest wealth.

Another source of destruction of forests is the smuggling of forest produce that goes on in connivance with Forest Department personnel. Smuggling has become so regularised that a tradition of 'mamools' to be paid to the Forest Department personnel at the forest check gates by lorries, buses and jeeps has emerged.

In addition to the Forest Department there are also other agencies causing destruction of forests. Very few Soligas own cattle In fact the inhabitants of the villages surrounding the forests constantly graze their cattle in the forests.

Let us next consider the destruction of wild life. The Soligas do not hunt or fish for food. The few flintstock rifles owned by them were confiscated by the government years ago. Disarmed thus they have to remain watchful throughout the night to guard their crops against wild boar and elephants which have become a constant menace.

Let us now explore the possible threats to wild life. In a paper titled Management of Sanctuaries and National Parks and The Wild Life Act and Rules, the Additional Chief Conservator of Forests, Wild Life Preservation, Bangalore, Mr. M. K. Appayya has listed the causes of depletion of wild life. The second of the causes listed is Pesticides. There are 1,200 acres of plantation in the middle of thick forests in B R. Hills where the Arabica species of coffee is cultivated. About 8 kgs of fungicide (a combination of copper sulphate and lime) per acre, that is a total of about 9.6 tonnes of fungicide is applied twice a year–in June and in September–October. The application of dosage is concen trated over a week, and is washed down into the stream which flows through the jungle. Arabica is grown in the higher slopes and lower down the wild animals drink the water contaminated with chemicals. In addition to the fungicide about 4 kgs per

acre of benzene hexachloride, (a pesticide), that is, a total of about 4.8 tonnes is also applied twice a year. Wild life sanctuary or no wild life sanctuary, the coffee plantations are there to stay. Apparently the Forest Department is doing nothing about this threat to wild life.

In the past, the rajahs and the British used the Soligas, who have an excellent knowledge of the forest and of tracking, during their hunting expeditions. Much of the wild life was recklessly destroyed in this manner. Till recently poachers too were a seri ous menace, but the Forest Department has reduced it by tightening security measures.

We find that far from destroying wild life the Soligas have played a crucial role in the 'management' of the forest by the British and later on by the Forest officials. It is the Soligas who have an immediate and intimate knowledge of the forest and the Forest Department has to depend on them to keep track of wild animals, and to combat poachers and those who steal forest firewood. The Forest Department uses the Soligas to protect the forest but pays them a pittance in return–Rs. 7 a day for a 24 hour job as a watcher, with no clothing, footwear or protection from heat, cold, wind and rain.

Daily wages paid to the Soligas who work for the Forest Department is very meagre; men receive Rs. 6.50 a day while women get only Rs. 4.50. This nominal wage which compares poorly with what the Forest Department pays to labourers in parts of Coorg district who earn more than Rs. 10 a day, cannot meet their material requirements as the prices of grain and other basic consumer items are very high in B. R. Hills. This econcmic deprivation caused by the Forest Department therefore pushes some of the Soligas, negligibly few in number into the waiting hands of poachers and smugglers. Once caught they are severaly victimised since they neither have the economic means to bribe nor the political clout to pressurise Forest officials.

The Wild Life Act

It is on this state of affairs that the State Government is bringing its implementation of the Wild Life Protection Act. According to the Act entry within the sanctuary is restricted to those with a permit, those who hold immovable property within the sanctuary area, those who pass along a public highway through the sanctuary and those who have been permitted to reside within the sanctuary. Further the Act requires the DC to enquire into and determine the rights to land of all persons within the sanctuary limits and empowers him to acquire such land if he deems fit. The Soligas who have lived in the forest for an indeterminable age and whose ancestrial burial grounds are located in the forest do not, however, possess documents to prove their rights to the forest.

It is a further extension and concentration of the powers of the Forest Department that the Forest Bill proposed in 1980 also aims at. Under the proposed Bill the state government is empowered to declare any land as reserve forest and all private rights to the land have to be ratified by the Forest Settlement Officer who assumes "the powers of a civil court" in this respect. According to the Peoples Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) report 'Undeclared Civil War (A Critique of the Forest Policy)". "...in simple words it means that all rights of the people are extinguished".

The proposed Bill also lists a large number of offences which include 'trespassing" and "gathering forest produce" including leaves, grass, tubers, flowers and fruits in reserve forests. Even in any forest or wasteland which does not belong to the state government it may prohibit acts such as collection of grass or leaves. The punishment for these offences is severe and ranges from imprisonment upto 3 years or to a fine of Rs. 5000 or both. If the offence is committed "after sunset or before sunrise" the punishment can be doubled. Forest officials are vested with magisterial powers and may "arrest a person without a warrant"

for "reasonable suspicion". No legal proceedings can be launched against a forest official for "anything done by him in good faith under this Act" unless permission is given by his superior official". Of course, the Forest Bill has been withdrawn after repeated strong protests from all quarters. However there is still a strong lobby for its implementation. This Bill would give the Forest Department such sweeping powers that the destiny of the tribals would be entirely in its hands. This is sought to be justified by the claim that the tribals are the ones who cause denudation though it has been repeatedly established that the tribals play an insignificant role in the destruction of forests.

The tribals have a wealth of knowledge about the forest combined with an attitude of reverence and love that bears enormous significance to its conservation. The PUDR report carries this fact to its logical conclusion—"Generations of tribal communities over centuries have established a harmonious ecological balance with the forest. Their forest practices are an inseparable part of their religion and culture." (The Soligas, when they cut down a tree, have a custom of bowing down and paying obeisance to it.") Both knowledge of past history and concrete studies of their contemporary practices make it evident that *the forest dwellers are crucially required to prevent deforestation*".

The Forest Department's Past Record

What are the consequences of the Forest Department assuming such sweeping powers? What has its record been in the past? We quote again from the PUDR report ".....in Singhbum, in Bihar and Koraput in Orissa.....forest departments have become the biggest land grabbers by their arbitrary habit of of declaring cultivated areas as forests." The report goes on to say "At present 'forest villages' are organised in the forests of Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. In these settlements the tribals do not have a right to the land which they cultivate and are liable to punishment if they do not provide labour to the government under stipulated wages and

conditions. In other words, in these forest villages, tribals are the bonded labour of the government itself."

The Betta Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas who have been evicted from the forests of Nagarahole and Bandipur have become bonded labourers in the neighbouring villages. Some of them have become the menial attendants of tourists, hordes of whom flock here as part of the state government's lofty tourism promotion schemes. Some have been thrown into the great urban centres where they have neither a future nor a hope of one. The PUDR report sums up the common experience of evicted tribals :—

"They ultimately land up as casual wage labourers at the mercy of contractors or as destitutes in urban areas unable to adjust to the indifference of city life."

We may ask whether the Forest Department actually has ecological preservation as its goal. What are the imperatives that drive it? The paper and other softwood based industries demand large quantities of wood from the Forest Department and the demands will grow increasingly larger. Quantities that the Forest Department has already agreed to supply have not yet been met. Such a situation can only force the Forest Department to increase the land under plantation to provide raw material for the industry, which represents powerful political interests that cannot be ignored. This the Forest Department would be forced to do even at the cost of ecology unless the forces that represent ecological conservation make themselves felt far more strongly than they do today.

The Soliga Viewpoint

How do the Soligas perceive the threat of eviction that looms over these hills, their homeland? Says Rangegowda, pointing to the top of the hill, "We were originally settled there and then the Forest Department shifted us there and again there and again there and again here. How many times are we to be thrown from place to place? Now we are to be evicted from these hills

without being given any land. These are the hills where our forefathers were born, where they led their lives and were buried. Let the FD distribute poison to all Soligas, if it will not give us land. We would rather die that way." Again, he says, "The Forest Department and everybody want to preserve and prctect forest animals (kaadu pranigalu) but why has everyone forgotten us, the forest people (kaadu manushyaru) ? We say, if they want to drive us out of the forest, let them first drive out the animals, and then we will go."

Unequal land distribution

Thus we note that the Soligas the original inhabitants of B.R. Hills, have the least elaim over it. Of the 600-odd Soliga families about 66 only own land–around 189 acres of revenue land. Land however has been granted to all and sundry non-tribals (See table 5). 331 acres and 37 guntas of land are under the temple authorities. 50 acres of forest land was given to the department of horticulture and 30 acres of revenue land to the department of sericulture. In 1974, after the Wild Life Protection Act was passed, 3000 acres of forest land was distributed to Tibetans on the basis of 32 guntas per adult and 20 guntas per child at the Vodeyarapalya Tibetan Ressetlement Camp. Around 4000 Tibetans reside here now. Meanwhile thc Soligas who were cultivating in all about 75 acres of land in Hirihambala and Kathekalpodu are facing eviction, driving them straight into the hands of the Tibetans as bonded labourers. The government has clearly been freely distributing forest land to non–tribals. Why cannot the Soligas get their rightful share ?

Conclusion

Industrial growth has its imperatives that inexorably drive the demand for forest products. The Forest Department whose primary aim is to satisfy this need has continued and even intensified greatly the commercial exploitation of our forests. The Soligas too are given a small part in this drama by making them

wholly dependent on the Forest Department and by constantly holding over them the threat of eviction. The implementation of The Wild Life Act and the eventual eviction of the Soligas without granting them land would mean their destruction. While so much land is owned in B. R. Hills by non-tribals, and much more is planned to be brought under commercial tree plantations, when a vast area of virgin forest was cleared to rehabilitate the Tibetan refugees, it is only justified that Soligas get land to sustain themselves in their own homeland.

—The Soligas who are cultivating forest plantation land must be given the land they are presently cultivating. All evictions from such land must be stopped and it must be converted into revenue land and distributed to Soligas. This is fully justified considering that the Forest Department's eventual aim is to convert this land to teak, silver oak or eucalyptus plantations to satisfy the interests of the big industrialists.

—No land in the B. R. Hills forests should be granted to non-tribals.

—Land promised to the Soligas in Guruvinagadde (about 490 acres) from where they have been evicted, must be returned to them. Pledges are meant to be kept.

—We give below a list of podus where Soligas live but own no land-Seegebetta, Kalyani podu, Manjigundi podu, Hosapodu, Beduguli. Kyathedevara gudi, Kanneri Colony.

Land must be distributed in these areas in order to enable the Soligas to sustain their livelihood.

—In Adilabad in Andhra Pradesh tree pattas have been distributed. This means that they have a right to the products of these trees which includes honey, fruits, etc., as long as the tree survives. The fruit orchards must be brought under this system in B. R. Hills, to provide sustenance to the Soligas.

—Instead of eucalyptus, silver oak or teak plantations which are of no use to the forest people it would satisfy the interests at the tribals as well as that of ecology if trees bearing minor forest produce were planted. This would moreover bring the Forest Department's activity closer to the central government's professed policy of "developing the forests by developing the people of the forests."

—The eucalyptus monoculture in B. R. Hills forest must be immediately removed.

—Wages of the labourers must be improved, working conditions bettered and regularisation of watchers taken up immediately by the Forest Department with the view of overall development of the forest.

TABLE NO—5

SOME STATISTICS RELATING TO LAND IN BILIGIRI

Tribal Settlements	Population Enumeration by VGKK (July 1983)		No. of tribal families cultivating revenue land	Revenue land cultivated by tribals (acres)	Forest Plantation land under cultivation by tribals (acres)
	Families	Population (approximate)			
Seegebetta	31	155	–	–	10
Kalyani podu	12	60	–	–	–
Manjigundi Podu	11	55	–	–	5
Yerakanagadde	54	270	18	87–01	–
Hosapodu	94	470	–	–	25
Bedaguli	148	740	–	–	40
Bangali Podu	47	235	Included under Yerakanagadde		5
Kyathedevara Gudi	2	10	–	–	–
Kinnare Colony	94	470			40
Purani Podu	61	305	48	102-02	–
Uppnare Podu	30	150	–	–	15
TOTAL	580	2,900	66	189-03	140

—Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra

Number of non-tribal families in B R Temple	Revene land under cultivation by non–tribals (acres)	Revenue land under culti vation by other govt. agencies (acres)	Forest land under cultivation by govt. agencies (acres)
58	331–37 (in BR Temple Panchayat) 1,200-00 (in Bedaguli under coffee plantations controlled by 3 individuals)	39–00 (Dept. of Sericulture)	50–00 (Dept. of Horticulture)
58	1,531–37	39–00	50–00

TABLE NO—1

Quantity of soft wood allotted and removed by Karnataka's Industries during 1983—84

Sl. No.	Name of the industry	No. of industries	Quantity allotted (M^3)	Appx. Qty. removed during 1983-84 (M^3)
1.	Plywood	17	1,07,116	83601.556
2.	Matchwood	2	21,000	4103.211
3.	Chipboard	2	40,119	26216.816 (stacked cu. m.)
4.	Packing case	2	7,120	2781.265

TABLE NO—2

Quantity of Eucalyptus wood allotted to the Industries during 1983–84

Sl. No.	Name of the Industry	Quantity allotted in tonnes	Quantity removed in tonnes
1.	Harihar Polyfibre	2,05,000	59,026.180
2.	Mysore Paper Mills	88,000	14,519.348
3.	West Coast Paper Mills	32,000	1,301.765

TABLE NO—3

Supply of Bamboos to two paper mills during the year 1983–84

Sl. No.	Name	Allotment	Qty. received in tonnes
1.	West Coast Paper Mills Ltd., Dandeli	1,58,000	50,105.127
2.	Mysore Paper Mills, Bhadravathi.	1,26,500	94,909.867

TABLE NO—4

Firewood released to the Public for Domestic use during 1983–84 through (Upto end of December)

	No.	Quantity in M^3
1. Depots run by Karnataka State Forest Industries Corporation Ltd.	54	2,01,800
2. Depots run by Department	104	2,40,806
3. *Others :*		
i. Supplied to Co-operative Societies	30	93,600
ii. Tile factories		22,400
iii. Other institutions		14,053
iv. Karnataka Soaps and Detergegts Ltd., Bangalore		5,000

TABLE NO—6

The Working Plan

Every 30 years a working plan is prepared for the Forest Department giving a set of guidelines, a sort of plan of action, which the FD may not strictly follow :

The Working Plan for 1973–2003 recommends the following.

Ranges	Area under industrial plantation (acres)
BRT	8797
Chamrajnagar	
Bellatta	3950
Atkuly	7790
Budipaduga	7582
Punjur	2897
Hutchanakembarahalli	4200
Doddagowdanapalya	3628
TOTAL	38844

"We were originally settled there and then the Forest Department shifted us there and again there and again there and again here. How many times are we to be thrown from place to place? Now we are to be evicted from these hills without being given any land. These are the hills where our forefathers were born, where they led their lives and were buried. Let the FD distribute poison to all Soligas, if it will not give us land. We would rather die that way."

"The Forest Department and everybody want to preserve and protect forest animals (kaadu pranigalu) but why has everyone forgotten us, the forest people (kaadu manushyaru)? We say, if they want to drive us out of the forest, let them first drive out the animals, and then we will go."

Karnataka Civil Liberties Committee (KCLC) started taking up issues concerning civil liberties and democratic rights in early April, 1984. Fact-finding teams exposed the police brutality resulting in the death of a resident of Bangalore and countless atrocities on innocent people in March, 1984 by bringing out a publication, holding a press conference and hall meetings and taking up the cases with the Law Ministry and the enquiry commission.

KCLC also investigated the problems of bonded labour in H. Nagasandra Village of Kolar district. After identifying seventy-seven bonded labourers and exposing the negligence and false reports of the officials concerned. KCLC persuaded the Rural Development ministry to visit the village and conduct an official enquiry. KCLC also followed up the case for release and rehabilitation of the bonded labourers.

In this report KCLC has made a study of the impact of implementation of the Wild Life Preservation Act on Soliga Tribals of Biligiri Ranga (B.R.) Hills in Mysore district. KCLC has called a halt to their likely eviction from the forests, pointting out the ensuring threat to their livelihood.

In its attempt to focus on the violation of democratic rights by any agency in any form, and to create the necessary public awareness KCLC needs and invites democrats to participate in its activities.

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Copies of the report on bonded labour in Nagasandra of Kolar district are also available.

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